

Appl. No. 09/898,858
Amdt. dated: September 4, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 4, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-11, 13, 14, 16 and 21-24 are currently pending. Claims 1-11, 13, 14, 16 and 21-23 stand rejected. Further, Claim 24 stand objected to. By the present amendment, Applicant has cancelled Claims 1-11, 13, 14, 16 and 21-24 and has added new claim 25. No new matter has been added by the amendments herein. Reconsideration of the present application in light of the present remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 and Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13, 14, 16 and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,894,130 to Bach in view of either U.S. Patent No. 5,902,552 to Brickley or U.S. Patent No. 5,523,057 to Mazzilli.

The Examiner further rejected Claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,894,130 to Bach in view of either U.S. Patent No. 5,902,552 to Brickley, U.S. Patent No. 5,523,057 to Mazzilli or U.S. Patent No. 5,334,905 to Ullrich.

The Examiner, however, objected to Claim 24 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated Claim 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Although Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's §103 rejections, in order to expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicant has added new Claim 25, which is Claim 24 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (Claim 21) and the intervening claim (Claim 23) as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant has cancelled Claims 1-11, 13, 14, 16 and 21-24, but reserves the right to pursue these claims in this or another application.

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CONCLUSION

Applicants assert that this application is in condition for allowance. Early allowance is respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application and feels that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 372-2000.

Dated: September 4, 2003
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Respectfully submitted,

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